

Amendments to the claims:

1. - 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of *Staphylococcus epidermidis* rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

5. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus hominis*, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of *Staphylococcus hominis* rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

6. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus haemolyticus*, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of *Staphylococcus haemolyticus* rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

7. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus lugdunensis*, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of *Staphylococcus lugdunensis* rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

8. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus saprophyticus* said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of *Staphylococcus saprophyticus* rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

9. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of *Staphylococcus epidermidis* and one or more other *Staphylococcus* species other than *Staphylococcus aureus*, said PNA probe

being complementary to a target sequence of Staphylococcus epidermidis rRNA or rDNA or its complement

10. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of Staphylococcus hominis and one or more other Staphylococcus species other than Staphylococcus aureus, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of Staphylococcus hominis rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

11. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of Staphylococcus haemolyticus and one or more other Staphylococcus species other than Staphylococcus aureus, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of Staphylococcus haemolyticus rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

12. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of Staphylococcus lugdunensis and one or more other Staphylococcus species other than Staphylococcus aureus, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of Staphylococcus lugdunensis rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

13. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, comprising a nucleobase sequence suitable for the analysis of Staphylococcus saprophyticus and one or more other Staphylococcus species other than Staphylococcus aureus, said PNA probe being complementary to a target sequence of Staphylococcus saprophyticus rRNA or rDNA or its complement.

14.-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A PNA probe set consisting of SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7 and SEQ ID NO:8~~comprising a PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO:6, a PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 7 and a PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 8.~~

26. (Previously Presented) The PNA probe set of claim 25, wherein the probes are differently labeled for independent analysis of two or more *Staphylococcus* species.

27. – 51. (Cancelled)

51. (Withdrawn) A kit suitable for performing an assay for analysis of one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* in a sample, wherein said kit comprises:  
a) a PNA probe set according to claim 25 and b) other reagents or compositions necessary to perform the assay.

52. (Withdrawn) The kit of claim 51, wherein one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* and at least one other microorganism optionally present in a sample are independently detected, identified and/or quantitated.

53. (Withdrawn) The kit of claim 52, wherein one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* and *S. aureus* optionally present in a sample are independently detected, identified and/or quantitated.

54. (Withdrawn) The kit of any one of claims 51-53, wherein one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* optionally present in a sample is detected, identified and/or quantitated and its susceptibility to antimicrobial agents is determined.

55. (Withdrawn) The kit of any one of claims 51-53, wherein one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* detected is Coagulase-Negative *Staphylococci*, clinically significant Coagulase-Negative *Staphylococci*, or a subset of clinically significant Coagulase-Negative *Staphylococci*.

56. (Withdrawn) The kit of any one of claims 51-53, wherein the kit is used in an in situ hybridization assay.

57. (Withdrawn) The kit of claim 56, wherein the kit is a fluorescence in situ hybridization assay for simultaneous, independent (multiplex) identification of one more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus* and of *S. aureus*.

58. (Withdrawn) The kit of any one of claims 51-53, wherein the kit is used for a real-time PCR assay.

59. (Withdrawn) The kit of any one of claims 51-53, wherein the kit is used to examine clinical samples such as clinical specimens or cultures thereof.

60. (Withdrawn) The PNA probe set of claim 25, further comprising at least one PNA probe for the analysis of *S.aureus*.

61. (Cancelled)

62. (Cancelled)

63. (New) A PNA probe set consisting of three PNA probes SEQ ID NO 6, SEQ ID NO: 7 and SEQ ID NO: 8, wherein the PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 6 is 15 nucleotides in length, wherein the PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 7 is 16 nucleotides in length and wherein the PNA probe comprising SEQ ID NO: 8 is 16 nucleotides in length.

64. (New) A PNA probe set consisting of SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7 and SEQ ID NO:8 and at least one PNA blocking probe for the analysis of one or more *Staphylococcus* species other than *S. aureus*.

65. (New) A PNA probe set consisting of SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7 and SEQ ID NO:8 and at least one PNA probe for the analysis of *S. aureus*.